



BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT
OF
THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
FOR
1947.

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BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report for the year 1947, which is in a sense my first Annual Report to you although I did not assume office as your Medical Officer of Health until April 1st. The Report therefore contains reference to events which took place during the tenure of office of my predecessor, Sir Alan Moore.

I first wish to pay tribute to and to render thanks for the most kindly welcome which I received on my return to this part of England, from yourselves, the Chairman and Councillors, and from my colleagues your Chief and other Officers, and from the members of the Staff of the Public Health Department. The circumstances and needs of a Rural Area are not to be learnt off in a day, and I have many times had recourse to the fund of wisdom, experience and local knowledge possessed by your Clerk and your other Chief Officers, and I gratefully acknowledge their very willingly given help which has aided me to get to know the District far more quickly than I had thought possible.

Particularly would I pay a tribute to the kindness and to the personality of my predecessor, Sir Alan Moore. The esteem in which he is held in the District and the pleasant relations that existed between him and the people of the District have done much to make my way easy, and he has left me an inheritance of goodwill and of courtesy which I will strive to maintain.

From your Chief Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, his colleagues, and from the members of the clerical staff of the Health Department, I have had great help and kindness and I look forward to the happiness of working with them in the future to the promotion of the public health in this area.

Lastly, I should like to thank the Chairmen and members of the Committees with which I am particularly associated for their support and confidence.

I have the honour to be
Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ERIC C. DOWNER.

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
The Watch Oak,
Battle,
Sussex.

31st December, 1947.

N.B. This report is furnished in advance of the Registrar General's final statistics for the population of the District, births and deaths and notifications of infectious disease. These will be circulated later and a blank page (page 3) will be found to which they may be affixed when received.

N.B.2. As laid down in the Ministry of Health Circulars, the necessary copies of this report have been furnished to the Ministry of Health and other Bodies.

<u>Live Births.</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	263	238	501
Illegitimate	<u>30</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>45</u>
	293	253	546

<u>Stillbirths.</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	2	5	7
Illegitimate	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>

Live Birth-rate per 1,000 of Resident population 19.31

Live Birth-rate per 1,000 Civilian population
(England & Wales) 20.5

Still Birth-rate per 1,000 births (live and still) 12.65

<u>Deaths.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
	208	215	423

Death-rate per 1,000 population 14.92

Death-rate for England and Wales 12.0

Deaths under 1 year.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	8	9	17
Illegitimate	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
	10	10	20

Infant death-rate per 1,000 live births 36.63

Infant death-rate per 1,000 live births
(England and Wales) 41.00

Death-rate of legitimate infants per 1,000
legitimate live births 33.93

Death-rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000
illegitimate live births 66.66

Deaths under two years from diarrhoea....2. Death rate)
per 1,000 live) 3.66
births.)

Deaths under two years from diarrhoea per
1,000 live births, England and Wales. 5.8

Maternal deaths.....NIL. Maternal mortality rate 0.00

Death-rates from certain specific causes.

	<u>England & Wales</u>	<u>Battle R.D.C.</u>
Typhoid	0.01	0.00
Scarlet fever	0.00	0.00
Whooping cough	0.02	0.007
Diphtheria	0.01	0.00
Influenza	0.09	0.007
Smallpox	0.00	0.00
Measles	0.01	0.00

Population in 1947. (Registrar General's
estimate Mid-year) 28,270

Detailed causes of Deaths.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	4	5	9
Other forms of tuberculosis	0	2	2
Syphilitic diseases	1	2	3
Influenza	0	2	2
Cancer (all sites)	27	35	62
Diabetes	1	3	4
Intercranial vascular lesions	18	31	49
Heart diseases	88	75	163
Other circulatory diseases	4	4	8
Bronchitis	7	10	17
Pneumonia	5	8	13
Other respiratory diseases	2	1	3
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	5	1	6
Appendicitis	1	0	1
Other digestive diseases	3	6	9
Nephritis	5	5	10
Premature Birth	3	1	4
Birth injury and weakness	4	4	8
Suicide	0	1	1
Road traffic accidents	1	0	1
Other violence	10	2	12
All other causes	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>32</u>
	206	213	419

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STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health
part-time, also Assistant
County School Medical
Officer and Medical Officer
of Health for the Borough
of Rye.

From 1st January to 31st
March, 1947:
Alan Moore, M.B., D.P.H.

From 1st April, 1947:

Eric C. Downer, M.A., D.P.H.

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

W. Francis, C.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Sanitary Inspectors.

W. Ramsden, Cert.S.I.B.,
M.S.I.A.

W. T. Dunford, Cert.S.I.B.,
M.S.I.A.

K. G. Bewick, Cert.S.I.B.,
M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,

J. W. Chanell, Cert.S.I.B.,
M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.
(appointed 1st March, 1947).

Assistant for Rural Housing
Survey.

W. W. Whittaker. (resigned
31st September, 1947).

Chief Clerk.

Miss M. E. Portnell.

Assistant Clerks and
Shorthand-Typists.

Miss M. H. Hoarnshaw,
Miss E. Dorey,
Miss M. Sunnyside,
(appointed 14th July, 1947).
Mr. M. Stemp.

Assistant for Rodent Control.

Mr. J. Dixon.

I intend soon after completing one year in office to
furnish to the appropriate Committee a report on the staffing
of the Public Health Department.

THE BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT.

Area	117,059 acres.
Population in 1947. (Registrar General's estimate Mid-year)	Not yet received.
Number of inhabited dwellinghouses 1st April, 1947,	9,270.
Number of Rateable premises, 1st April, 1947,	10,633.
Rateable Value 31st December, 1947	£194,211.
Sum represented by a penny rate in the Financial year ending 31st March, 1947	£735.

OCCUPATION AND INDUSTRY.

The chief rural industries are Agriculture and Dairy Farming.

On the 31st December, 1947, the Gypsum Mines Ltd. employed the following personnel:-

Surface.

<u>Englishmen.</u>	<u>German P.O.W.s.</u>	<u>Women - Office and Canteen Staff.</u>
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231	-	12
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Underground.

339	118	-
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The personnel employed by other industries in the District was as follows:-

	<u>Males.</u>	<u>Females.</u>
Hodsons Mill, Robertsbridge.	20	14
West's Engineering Works, Camber.	13	2
Gray Nicolls, Robertsbridge.	65	17
The Tannery, Battle.	16	-
Camber Beach Works, Camber.	7	2
Senlac Metal Casements, Battle.	50	9
S.E. Tar Distillers, Rye Harbour.	4	-
Newbery Bros., Battle. (Average number).	30	50
John Carter Ltd., Rye Harbour.	15	-

Cases of disease other than tuberculosis notified in 1947 and the two years before.
The figures for 1945 and 1947 refer to civilians only. Those for 1946 include a
member of the R.A.F. whose home was in the District.

	1945	1946	1947	Admissions to Isolation Hospitals in 1947 for the cases noted.
Scarlet fever	18	22	12	6
Diphtheria	1	2	1	1
Puerperal pyrexia	5	3	2	
Ophthalmia neonatorum	0	2	0	
Anterior poliomyelitis	1	0	4	1
Cerebro spinal meningitis	2	3	0	
Dysentery	1	0	0	
Enteric Group	0	1	0	
Pneumonia	15	20	4	
Erysipelas	4	3	3	
Measles	649	81	150	2
Whooping Cough	51	35	140	

AGE GROUPS AND SEX INCIDENCE.

	Under 1		1		2		3		4		5-9		10-14		15-19		20-34		35-44		45-64		65 & over	Age not known
	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f	m	f		
Scarlet fever											3	5	1	2	1									
Diphtheria					1																			
Puerperal pyrexia																			1					1
Pneumonia																	1					1		
Erysipelas																						1		1
Poliomyelitis							1				4				1		1							
Measles	1	2	6	4	9	7	4	7	6	8	4	35	6	2	2	3	1	4				7		
Whooping Cough	6	7	8	4	6	10	8	7	7	5	33	29	6	2				2						

TUBERCULOSIS.

Cases in Register at December 31st, 1945,
1946 and 1947.

Year	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	male	female	male	female
1945	52	70	30	31
1946	60	79	38	33
1947	64	82	41	34

Cases entered in the Register during 1947.

Age Groups	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	male	female	male	female
Under 1	-	-	-	-
1 - 4	-	1	-	-
5 - 14	-	2	2	2
15 - 24	1	1	1	1
25 - 34	3	2	1	-
35 - 44	1	4	-	-
45 - 54	3	-	-	-
55 - 64	-	1	-	-
65 and above	1	-	-	-

Notifications under the Food & Drugs Act, 1938,
of actual or suspected food-poisoning.

<u>1947.</u>	<u>1946.</u>	<u>1945.</u>
1	0	0

A short but sharp outbreak of food poisoning occurred at the Normanhurst P.O.W. Camp on 9th September, 1947. On that date a mixture of tinned meat, cooked fresh meat and bread, mixed the day before, was issued to approximately 400 Prisoners of War as a working snack. The whole 400 subsequently complained of varying symptoms from mild discomfort to acute enteritis.

The symptoms in order of frequency were abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea, headache. Approximately 200 vomited, rather less had diarrhoea, 40 had headache and in 10 cases muscular pain in the calves and joints was present.

By the evening of the next day, 10th September, all were again well.

Samples of the mixture and of butter used and a tin of tinned meat were sent to the Royal East Sussex Hospital Laboratory. Unfortunately no residue of the fresh meat was available, nor any sample of vomitus.

The Laboratory report on the mixture was that it produced a heavy growth of lactose fermenting coliform bacilli, giving the fermentation reactions of *B. coli* communior.

SCABIES.

Scabies was not prevalent during the year, only the few cases or groups of cases noted below being brought to notice. Proscabin was furnished when necessary by the Health Department and distributed by and used under the supervision of the District Nurses.

Cases, single patients or more than one in a family, were found or reported as follows:-

<u>Month.</u>	<u>Parish.</u>
January.	Battle.
February.	Catsfield, Ticehurst (Flimwell).
April	Catsfield, Salchurst.
May	Etchingham (Hurst Green).
July	Burwash.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Colonel J. E. H. Sawyer, M.D. held 169 immunisation clinics during the year.

Throughout the year the Health Department was greatly indebted to the Burwash Branch of the British Red Cross for supplying Colonel Sawyer with nursing help.

We cordially acknowledge the help of the District Nurses and Head Teachers.

Hereunder is a table showing the comparative figures for the past three years. From these figures it might be thought that the number of children immunised between 5 and 14 in the past year was considerably less, but this is fully explained by the high number who have received the two injections under five years of age.

	Immunisation		Re-immunisation	Schick Test
	Under 5	5 - 14		
1945	311	73	222	83 (4 positive)
1946	347	114	235	5 (All negative)
1947	424	53	214	31 (All negative)

Total number of children under 15 who had received two injections by December 31st, 1947:

Under 5	1,034
5 - 14 (incl.)	3,132
	<hr/> 4,166 <hr/>

Percentages cannot be given at present because the population figures of the two age groups are not available.

Schick Test.

As a means of finding out whether a further injection of antigen should be given at 10 years old, two schools were selected and Schick tests were carried out on a number of the children of the age group in question. This was made possible by the helpful co-operation of the Head Teachers and the result obtained showed that all the children tested were negative, i.e. they did not require a further reinforcing dose.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The year 1947 was on the whole a mild year as regards infectious disease in the Battle Rural District.

The twelve cases of scarlet fever were, with one exception, extremely mild and the six who were hospitalised were so dealt with on environmental grounds rather than owing to the seriousness of the cases.

The one case of diphtheria was mild and made an uneventful recovery.

It is interesting to note that in spite of the extremely severe weather experienced during the first few months of the year, only four cases of pneumonia were notified in the entire District.

Measles and whooping cough, those twin menaces of the young child, were fairly prevalent during the year. Two cases of measles were hospitalised, one of which was a case of great interest, being a young woman of some thirty years of age who developed measles rapidly complicated by encephalitis (sleepy sickness). Her case at one time seemed hopeless but she eventually made an absolute and complete recovery. Her little boy who subsequently developed measles had a mild and uncomplicated attack.

As regards both measles and whooping cough, one feels that the figures, 150 and 140, do not represent the whole story and that many cases were not notified. The legend still persists that measles and whooping cough are trivial and almost natural diseases of young children and health education should be directed to impressing the public with the fact that both can, owing to the severity of the possible complications, result in death. Far too often the doctor is not called in in the vital early stages and the child is permitted to run about spreading the disease among his neighbours. Too many children are still allowed to be up and about at too early a stage resulting in liability to late complications. Whooping cough also is a dangerous and taxing disease and for both these complaints medical attention is necessary.

Strict and regular notification of whooping cough and measles is discouraged by the fact that the fee for notification remains at 1/- instead of 2/6 as in the case of other notifiable diseases. We believe that more strict observance of the Law would result from the fee being made the same as in other cases, viz. 2/6, and even then we would point out that that small fee is about the only thing that has not increased since 1939.

ACUTE ANTERIOR POLIO MYELITIS.

The Battle Rural District had its share, and I am thankful to report a small one, in the epidemic of this disease which scourged the country during the warm weather of 1947.

This disease sadly lacks a reasonable name. Its proper name set out above is too long, and to call a disease which kills healthy adults and disables American Presidents, "infantile paralysis" is just inaccurate. In fact the only age group which you could call "infants" seems to be fairly exempt. The ailment is a disease of later childhood, adolescence and the first half of adult life.

Five cases only are known to me as having occurred in the Battle Rural District. Four of these were notified, one was not, because a reasonable doubt existed in the mind of the practitioner attending the case.

The five cases in order were:

Boy, age 16,	Southern area.	14.8.47.
Lady, age 34,	North-western area.	25.8.47.
Boy, age 5,	Central area.	29.8.47.
Boy, age 3,	North-eastern area.	4.10.47.
Lady, age 28,	Northorn area.	6.10.47.

The first case was hospitalised in the Borough Sanatorium, Hastings; was for a time very gravely ill; was moved to the Royal East Sussex Hospital with extensive paralysis of both legs and one arm; has now made a considerable recovery, arms free from paralysis, legs very much improved, able to cycle and to walk a good deal but not yet able to resume his work as a farm labourer.

The second case was not hospitalised as adequate isolation and attention and massage could be and were provided at home. She has made an almost complete recovery, her only complaint being that she feels tired towards evening and has difficulty in lifting anything straight up, say picking her child from the floor.

The third case was not hospitalised because of the parents' refusal. The isolation was not good but the medical attention and care excellent. The child has made an uneventful recovery and never showed any sign of paralysis.

The fourth case, a child of three, was simply discovered to have paralysis and no definite history of a cold or febrile attack could be found. He is still in leg irons and is attending the Royal East Sussex Hospital for treatment, where he is making progress.

The fifth case, a lady of 28, was nursed at home by her mother and attended by the family doctor. Isolation was good, and she has made an uneventful recovery.

Four other cases who were strongly suspicious of poliomyelitis were hospitalised but laboratory and other investigation proved them to be suffering from other diseases.

The first, in August, a Bedfordshire boy aged 12 from a Scout Camp, turned out to be a simple case of tonsillitis.

The second, in October, a man of 35 from the eastern region, was found to be suffering from influenza.

The third, also in October, was a young lady aged 19 from the north-eastern area. The origin of this case was probably the patient's nervous condition.

The fourth, in December, a young man in the R.A.F. aged 18½, turned out to be influenza.

These four cases show how extremely easy it is to confuse the early stages of poliomyelitis with other, possibly more common, complaints, and in each of these cases the correct thing to do was to regard them as cases of poliomyelitis until they could be proved to be otherwise.

In addition to the five proven cases and the four near misses, I saw, at the request of medical practitioners in various parts of the District, about one dozen other cases where I was definitely able, after consultation with the doctor and examination of the patient, to say that this was not poliomyelitis.

One of these cases was the child of a family of hop-pickers who complained of weakness and pain in his leg, and who turned out to have an abscess in the leg bone, i.e. an osteomyelitis.

As far as numbers go, this District may be considered to have got off very lightly. When one considers that there were many hundreds of young folk camping in the District and several thousands of hop-pickers, added to the usual influx of summer visitors, it represents a very lucky escape.

The contacts of poliomyelitis cases gave the Department a good deal of work, and many communications were received from the Authorities of other areas informing us that people who were contacts of 'polio' were now staying in our District. All these cases had to be followed up, questioned and examined. Between that and the consultations with doctors a very great mileage was accomplished. Premises where patients, suspected patients or contacts lived had to be inspected from the sanitary angle. All this involved considerable work for the Sanitary Inspectors.

In one case only a contact was advised to stand off work. She was engaged in the preparation of salad meals in a roadhouse. She complied strictly with the Council's advice and the Council, as an act of grace, reimbursed her for her loss of wages.

The trouble began earlier in the Battle Rural District than most, because of the outbreak of 'polio' in a great Public School in the south of England in July. A number of boys were sent home from this great School including one from our District. Moreover a number of the boys at this Public School had sisters at a large Girls' School in this District. Measures tending to prevent the spread of the disease and to diagnose it early were concerted with the medical attendant to this Girls' School.

Throughout the early summer a number of other boys in the District had to be kept under observation because of an outbreak at a school in an adjoining County.

In all these cases a personal visit was paid by myself as soon as the case or contact arose and again at the end of any reasonable incubation period. Very simple instructions were given to the boys and to their parents, i.e. the avoidance of crowded places and the leading of an open air life, etc. and these instructions were confirmed by a stencilled leaflet handed to each parent personally. No case of 'polio' arose out of all these contacts.

The strictest watch was kept on all camps, official or unofficial, and the co-operation of people like the District Nurses was sought to bring to our knowledge the existence of any new camp. All camps were visited by one of the Sanitary Inspectors and a personal letter from the Medical Officer of Health handed to whoever was in charge of the camp. Special attention was paid to latrines, cooking circumstances and water supply. With the exception of the one case which turned out to be tonsillitis, no case whatsoever occurred in connection with any camp.

I am the last person to wish to increase the number of checks and cross-checks that are kept of citizens today, but we should have been greatly helped last summer if it had been the duty of people wishing to camp in this beautiful District to notify the Medical Officer of Health of their intention to do so. Despite all our investigation there may well have been small camps of one or two tents about which we never heard at all and which consequently escaped supervision.

Co-operation with Practitioners of the District.

At the beginning of the epidemic a personal letter was sent to every doctor known to practice in the Battle Rural District, giving him the Medical Officer of Health's day and night telephone numbers and offering immediate co-operation at all times. The attention of practitioners was called to an article on 'polio' published by the British Medical Journal at the instance of the Minister of Health. At a later period the doctors were afforded the chance of seeing a film on the disease but at that time its incidence was on the wane. I wish to pay a cordial tribute to the way in which the practitioners of the District co-operated with your Health Department regarding these cases and to say that to their vigilance and promptitude a lot is due.

Right up to the end of the year it has been observed that odd cases notified as 'polio' have been occurring in many areas and counties, and it would appear that the disease is only simmering. I have little doubt that should we get again a hot and dry summer, it will raise its ugly head, but it will find us all with a far greater knowledge of it and we shall be on the look out for it.

PUBLIC HEALTH (AIRCRAFT) REGULATIONS, 1938.

Throughout the year we received fairly regularly notifications, which sometimes arrived a trifle late for action, of persons arriving in this country by air or by ship from infected areas. It is obvious that persons arriving by ship from areas infected with smallpox would usually arrive in this country very near to the end of a possible incubation period, so that their supervision is a very short matter. The incubation period may even have expired.

But the arrival in this country of persons by air who were walking the streets of Bombay the day before presents a very different problem and they require some control. A number of these cases, who with one exception seemed to reside in remote parts of the District, were brought to our notice, seen and advised, and vaccination marks or certificates inspected. No case of small pox resulted from any of these contacts.

Similarly one contact of cholera was kept under observation.

We anticipate that this work will continue as air travel between Asia and Africa and this country increases.

CONTROL OF ICE CREAM MANUFACTURE AND SALE.

The outstanding event of 1947 was the coming into force on the 1st May, in accordance with the provisions of Circular 69/47 of the Ministry of Health of 10th April, 1947, of the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1947. A circular letter setting forth the requirements of these Regulations supplementing those already required under Sections 13 and 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, was circulated to all known manufacturers or sellers of ice cream, and the enforcement of the standards laid down in the 1947 Regulations as far as was reasonable was proceeded with from the 1st May.

It is not easy to exaggerate the importance in an area like this of ensuring a supply of pure and wholesome ice cream to the general public. During the summer the District is filled with ordinary summer visitors, campers, the majority of them juvenile, and hop-pickers, and there is a very large demand for ice cream, more especially in the coastal districts.

It is of course just those coastal districts, with their relative lack of a proper water supply, that cause most anxiety.

The new provisions as to heat treatment, cooling and storage will be insisted on as far as is reasonable, having regard to the difficulties of obtaining apparatus at the present moment, and particular care will be taken to enforce Section 5 whereby ice cream shall be protected from dirt, dust and other contamination at all times during its manufacture, storage and distribution. Sampling will be done throughout the summer season with a view to assessing the degree of bacteriological purity.

As regards the registration of manufacturers of ice cream, our practice is that the premises are thoroughly inspected by one of the Sanitary Inspectors and also by the Medical Officer of Health prior to the Committee dealing with the matter. In the case of any manufacturer having other than main water supply, the water is also thoroughly tested. Broadly speaking it is not our policy to permit the manufacture of ice cream in the coastal area for three reasons:

- (1) Shortage of water supply at all times and especially in seasons of drought.
- (2) Sand storms especially at Camber.
- (3) The ease with which ice cream manufactured in the adjacent County Boroughs can be obtained.

As regards the sale of ice cream, our policy is not to permit in the Camber area, which is liable to sand storms as well as water shortage, the sale of ice cream except wrapped or in containers. In our other coastal areas, Winchelsea Beach and Pett, it is not so necessary as the beach there is shingle and sand storms do not occur.

Generally throughout the District we discourage the sale of cones and wafers in favour of the sale of wrapped ice cream or ice cream in containers.

It is not entirely clear whether the legal enactments at present in force give the Authority the right to grant a limited registration on condition of the sale of wrapped or container ice cream. The exception under the Law from the requirement of registration for ice cream sold in an hotel or cafe as part of its meal service is unfortunate and considerably restricts thorough control of this potentially dangerous commodity.

A very close watch will be kept on the manufacture and sale of ice cream during the coming summer.

INSULIN.

The Council continued to supply insulin to persons suffering from diabetes who were unable to afford to procure it themselves.

At the beginning of the year four persons were so supplied. One died in November, two more persons requested a supply during the year which was granted, leaving five being supplied at the 31st December, 1947.

To avoid possible waste, the system has been adopted of asking each of these patients to furnish a medical certificate quarterly.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

In October, 1947, the Battle District was honoured by a visit from an Assistant Commissioner of the Local Government Boundary Commission, who is investigating the claims of the Hastings County Borough to include a large portion of the Battle District, including all its coastal area, within the bounds of a new County Borough. The Commission visited the Watch Oak on 14th October and informal discussions took place.

For many months prior to this event considerable discussion and activity took place, in which the Health Department was concerned, regarding the reply to be made to the Hastings proposals and the preparation of the case to be laid by the Battle Rural District Council before the Boundary Commission.

I would not presume to criticize the wisdom of setting up a Local Government Boundary Commission at the present time and placing the whole Local Government of the country in the melting pot as far as areas of jurisdiction are concerned, resulting in the situation that no Authority knows either what its area or its powers will be five years from now, but this has actually affected the working of your Health and Sanitary Department, so its results must be noted.

The first result was that at a time when important problems, necessarily postponed in the national emergency and which had been piling up throughout the war years, urgently needed attention, the energies of members of the Public Health Staff had to be diverted to the consultations and investigations necessary to the compilation of the Council's case for the Boundary Commission. Furthermore, the uncertainty as to the future renders the post war re-organisation of the Health Department impossible for the present, e.g. the question of whether each Sanitary Inspector should once again have his own district could hardly be decided until we know the probable boundary of the Council's area.

Lastly, two feelings of frustration and insecurity arise from this state of affairs. One is the feeling that a lot of planning and work and schemes which have been drawn up might be rendered completely futile by a change of boundary. The second that a gross alteration in area might of necessity result in a reduction of staff with or without equitable compensation. From the point of view of a smoothly working and keen Health Department, it is essential that these matters should be speedily determined and that the Council's staff, when they know their final area, should be allowed to get on with the job.

Unfortunately a speedy determination is the last thing that is likely to happen. There is reason to hope that the claims of Hastings will be disposed of one way or the other early in 1948 but there remain the questions of a possible alteration of the Kent-Sussex border, which is part of the Rural District boundary, and of the boundaries of the County Districts contained within the County of East Sussex.

Our endeavour therefore has been throughout to study what would form a convenient and effective Sanitary Area in the extreme eastern part of Sussex, an area which will be not only large enough and financially strong enough to be an efficient Sanitary Area but which should also be a reasonable unit for the establishment of decentralised or delegated local administration of the many great powers, e.g. National Health Service, Education, Town Planning, that are being placed by Parliament on the County Councils. For while there is much wisdom in placing the making of policy and the financial control of these great services in the hands of County Councils, it is also true that they will lose common and democratic touch with the people whom they purport to serve and will ultimately lose in efficiency if there is not decentralised local day-to-day administration.

The fact that the new Health Services are vested in County Councils and that Sanitary and Housing Authority remains vested in the County Districts does not alter the essential unity in the promotion of public health that exists between these two groups and the essential local nature of the public interest therein.

It is my considered opinion that such an area, extensive enough, financially resourceful enough and containing a common community interest, is found in the combination for health and sanitary purposes of the present area of the Battle Rural District Council and the Borough of Rye. It might be, and probably would be, necessary, owing to the peculiar shape of the proposed area, that an office should exist at Rye as well as at Battle, but its extent coupled with its remoteness from the centre of County administration, plus the peculiar situation of Rye embedded in the Battle Rural District, all re-inforce its desirability.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT.

During the year 1947 the first tentative steps have been taken to set up the various Bodies and Authorities required to administer the National Health Service Act of 1946. Regional Hospital Boards have been formed and the entire Rural District is included in the South Eastern Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. Executive Councils have been appointed and are proceeding with the spade work necessary to the re-organisation of the General Practitioner, Dental and Pharmaceutical Services. The County Council has appointed its Statutory Health Committee to administer the services to be provided by the Local Health Authorities. Preliminary inspection of sites for Health Centres has taken place. The appointed day for the coming into force of the National Health Service is 5th July, 1948.

A request was received from the County Council asking that the Battle Rural District Council should agree to their Medical Officer of Health supervising the diphtheria immunisation and vaccination services to be provided by the County Council as from the 5th July. The Battle Council agreed. As far as diphtheria immunisation is concerned, this involves a change more apparent than real, because as this service is at present the responsibility of the Battle Rural District Council, the Medical Officer of Health is already carrying it out, and the only question involved will be a small apportionment of salary. As far as vaccination is concerned, the position is somewhat different and will have to be discussed but it is obvious that the two services can be easily worked together.

The County Council have also asked your Medical Officer of Health to assume some degree of medical supervision of the County's Ambulance Service in the locality.

To this extent the County Council have recognised the need for the decentralisation of services under the National Health Service Act, 1946.

When in accordance with the provisions of this Act the County Council's Scheme was communicated to this Authority, the Rural District Council exercised its right to make representations to the Minister for the modification of the County Council's Scheme, holding that efficiency and local interest would alike be impaired if the County Council did not provide for decentralised day-to-day administration of many more of the services confided to it under the Act. The matter is at present sub judice with the Minister of Health, and having the efficiency of these services in the area in view, it is to be hoped that the Minister will enjoin the County Council to modify its Scheme or that the County Council in the light of this Authority's recommendations will themselves see fit to decentralise in this area without pressure from the Minister.

It is felt very strongly that a Council, which is the local Sanitary Authority and whose members intimately know the District, should be very closely associated with the day-to-day working of these related services, whose success will not only depend on their administrative efficiency but on what the public think of them and on whether the public find them administered by local people whom they have trusted and known for years or by distant Committees and officials in a County town fifty miles from some parts of this District.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE.

Your Medical Officer of Health devotes, as did his predecessor, two and a half days a week to the work of Assistant School Medical Officer to the East Sussex County Council, inspecting the school children of this area and the Borough of Rye. This is a very important combination because it ensures unity between the officer who inspects the children and the officer who inspects their homes and is an example of the essential link between sanitary and health services. Moreover it affords your Medical Officer of Health a little practice of clinical medicine and is a means of keeping him in touch, as he should ever be, with the practitioners of the District.

While it is very possible that representations may have to be made to you later that this area requires a little more of its Medical Officer of Health's time, it is very strongly felt that especially when the National Health Service starts this link should be maintained.

HEALTH-EDUCATION AND PROPAGANDA.

In the National Health Service Act one of the duties placed on the Local Health Authority (the East Sussex County Council) is the provision of health education, and it is strange that only now has a statutory blessing been bestowed on this most important subject. Not that it is new for both your Sanitary Inspector and your Health Visitor are essentially health educators, but it is good to see its importance recognised in a Statute by Parliament.

In the meantime, it is one of the duties of your Medical Officer of Health, and to your present M.O.H. one of his pleasantest ones, to go about his District preaching the gospel of health. Contact was therefore made during the Spring with the Secretary of the County Federation of Women's Institutes and with the Local Organiser of Youth Clubs for Battle and Rye district, and it has been made clear to the Women's Institutes and Youth Clubs that the Medical Officer of Health is willing to go to them, if asked, to talk on health subjects. By the end of the year eleven bookings for Women's Institutes and one for the Westfield Youth Club had been made.

In my judgment there is no expenditure in time and energy that would pay such dividends as the bringing home of the truths of health education to the public, and apart from wireless talks, the best method of doing this is to talk to small groups with plenty of opportunity for questions and discussions. I propose to persevere with this important and enjoyable aspect of my work.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

for the year ended 31st December, 1947.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting the report on the work of my Department for the year ended 31st December, 1947.

The only Staff changes were the appointment of Mr. J. W. Chanell as Sanitary Inspector, to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr. Boever, and the appointment of Miss M. Sunnyside as shorthand-typist.

As a result of the Rural Housing Survey a large number of unsatisfactory dwelling houses have been discovered, but owing to the economic situation, it has been extremely difficult to secure any but the most urgent repairs. Much of the value of this Survey will be lost owing to the long interval which must necessarily elapse between the inspection and the repair of the houses concerned. In my opinion, the carrying out of such a comprehensive survey so soon after the war is a waste of time and money, as its results can be little more than statistical.

House Requisitioning under Defence Regulations has involved a great deal of work both on the part of the Inspectorial and office staff, involving as it does detailed inspections and the preparation of lengthy Schedules of Conditions, but it is a great consolation to know that the result has been the provision of houses for homeless families.

Most of the Requisitioning work has been carried out by Mr. Dunford, to whom great credit is due for the accuracy of his reports.

Numerous inspections have been made in connection with applications for building licences and by careful scrutiny it has been possible to ensure that the owners of dwellinghouses which are not weatherproof have secured the bulk of the licences available.

I wish to express my appreciation to the Medical Officer of Health and all members of both my indoor and outdoor staff for their assistance and co-operation during the year, and to thank my colleagues in other Departments for the help they have rendered.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. FRANCIS.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Public Health Department,
The Watch Oak,
BATTLE.

31st December, 1947.

ANALYSIS OF INSPECTIONS DURING 1947.

Drains and Sanitary Accommodation	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	360
Water Supply	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	161
Milk and Dairies	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	158
Building Inspections including Building Licences	..							1095
Hop Pickers' Dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	58
Infectious Diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	73
Salvage	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	80
Public Cleansing	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	56
Food Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	62
Housing and Public Health Acts	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	223
Requisitioning	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	259
Moveable Dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	229
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	104
Nuisances	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	47
Verminous Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Factories and Workshops	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Schools	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	82
Housing Survey	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1652
Shops Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2

NOTICES SERVED UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

Number of Notices outstanding at end of 1946 ..	84
Number of Informal Notices served during 1947 ..	255
Number of Informal Notices complied with during 1947 ..	214
Number of Informal Notices outstanding at end of 1947 ..	125
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1946 ..	1
Number of Statutory Notices served during 1947 ..	7
Number of Statutory Notices complied with during 1947 ..	5
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1947 ..	3

NOTICES SERVED UNDER THE HOUSING ACTS.

Number of Notices outstanding at end of 1946 ..	21
Number of Informal Notices served during 1947 ..	2
Number of Informal Notices complied with during 1947 ..	21
Number of Informal Notices outstanding at end of 1947 ..	2
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1946 ..	3
Number of Statutory Notices served during 1947 ..	-
Number of Statutory Notices complied with during 1947 ..	3
Number of Statutory Notices outstanding at end of 1947 ..	-

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

No routine inspections of factories or workshops were made during the year, the work under this heading being confined to dealing with Notices received from H.M. Inspector of Factories, chiefly in relation to sanitary accommodation.

Number of Notices outstanding 31st December, 1946	3
Number of Notices served	2
Number of Notices complied with	3
Number of Notices outstanding	2

RURAL HOUSING SURVEY.

Work has been continued on the Survey during the year and portions of three Parishes only remain to be completed. At the end of the year 5,424 houses had been inspected.

Mr. Whittaker, who was employed in a temporary capacity to assist in the Survey, left the Council's employment on account of ill-health in September.

A table, giving details of the survey up to the end of the year is set out over-leaf. The classification according to the standard of fitness is summarised below:

Category 1	..	..	..	..	..	reasonably fit.
Category 2	..	..	..	..	..	minor repairs required.
Category 3	..	..	..	..	..	serious sanitary defects but capable of repair at reasonable cost.
Category 5	..	..	..	..	..	incapable of repair at reasonable cost.

Parish	Category			V	Total
	I	II	III		
Ashburnham	-	4	8	75	87
Battlo	45	144	222	60	471
Bockley	38	77	66	55	236
Bodiam	26	16	16	11	69
Brede	48	133	89	23	293
Brightling	1	9	27	48	85
Broomhill	-	198	52	35	285
Burwash	57	111	109	44	321
Catsfield	18	32	91	20	161
Crowhurst	20	17	41	7	85
Dallington	4	25	10	27	66
East Guldeford	-	5	15	5	25
Etchingham	17	32	39	25	113
Ewhurst	43	55	45	47	190
Fairlight	35	75	25	2	137
Guestling	13	74	80	15	182
Icklesham	53	125	233	42	453
Iden	17	21	45	15	98
Mountfield	13	61	73	5	152
Northiam	11	118	92	27	248
Ore	2	23	8	-	33
Peasmarsh	55	48	42	36	181
Penhurst	1	-	3	5	9
Pett	19	47	61	18	145
Playdon	8	18	16	3	45
Rye Foreign	7	11	14	18	50
Salchurst	4	29	59	9	101
Sedlescombe	20	53	56	12	141
St.Thomas the Apostle	-	27	16	13	56
Ticehurst	46	147	188	108	489
Udimore	4	12	39	22	77
Westfield	64	48	134	46	292
Whatlington	-	16	32	-	48
Totals	689	1811	2046	878	5424
Percentage	12.7%	33.4%	37.7%	16.2%	100%

MILK AND DAIRIES.

The National Milk Testing Scheme, under which the milk of Wholesale Producers is regularly tested, appears to be working quite efficiently, and it was not therefore considered necessary to take any further routine samples of milk during the year.

It is however to be regretted that the results of tests under the above mentioned scheme are not transmitted to local authorities. No one desires to harass milk producers in these difficult times, but unless some closer liaison between the responsible bodies can be inaugurated it seems that the Council will in future have to re-introduce routine sampling in order to obtain information already in the possession of a Government Department.

The absence of proper water supplies together with the unsatisfactory structural condition of so many of the registered premises renders it difficult for many dairy farmers consistently to produce clean, wholesome milk. The improvement of dairying standards suspended by the war, is again being delayed by economic factors such as building controls and the food production drive.

During the year 33 applications for registration as Wholesale Producers, and 5 as Retail Purveyors, were considered and granted by the Council. The majority of these were in respect of change of either wholesaler or retailer, though with the increased demand for milk, quite a number of the applications were in respect of premises not previously used for the purpose.

At the end of the year, there were on the Register, 564 producers and 74 retail purveyors of milk. Of these producers 49 were registered in respect of T.T. milk and 40 in respect of Accredited milk.

When the responsible authorities issue a standard code of conditions for the production and sale of Designated Milk it may be found easier to persuade farmers to undertake the necessary improvements to their premises.

No prosecutions under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, were undertaken during the year but it was necessary to serve a Notice under Section 22 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, upon a producer-retailer requiring him to appear before the Public Health Committee to show cause why he should not, in view of his failure thoroughly to cleanse and sterilise his bottles and utensils, be removed from the Register of Milk Retailers. Following his appearance before the Committee, this retailer duly obtained a steam steriliser, and after the receipt of satisfactory reports on further samples it was resolved that his name be not removed from the Register.

MEAT INSPECTION.

No animals were slaughtered for sale for human food at the private slaughter-houses in the district during the year 1947, all slaughtering having been transferred to the Government slaughter-house at Hastings in August, 1941. This meat is inspected at Hastings before distribution.

It was found necessary, however, on a number of occasions to inspect meat in butchers' shops within the District, chiefly on account of decomposition and bonetaint, and a small quantity had to be condemned.

OTHER FOODS.

During the year the undermentioned was found to be unfit and was withheld from sale for human consumption:-

1	tin	Spam
15	tins	Stewed Steak
1	tin	Spiced Ham
37	lbs.	Corned Beef
3	tins	Luncheon Meat
1	tin	Meat Loaf
4	tins	Minced Beef
19	lbs.	Mutton
1,165	lbs.	Beef
2 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.	Pork
92	lbs.	Bacon
4	tins	Sausages
55	tins	Fish
14	tins	Soup
100	tins	Meat and Vegetables
18	tins	Peas
32	tins	Beans
4	tins	Tomatoes
2	tins	Tomato Juice
8	tins	Vegetables
10	cwts.	Potatoes
1	tin	Macaroni (with cheese)
1	tin	Spaghetti
4	jars	Pickles
4	jars	Fish Paste
1	pkt.	Shredded Wheat
2,991	lbs.	Self Raising Flour
2 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs.	Biscuits
163	tins	Milk
1 $\frac{1}{4}$	lbs.	Tea
22	tins	Jam
183	lbs.	Dates
25	lbs.	Prunes
9	tins	Fruit
4	bottles	Orange Squash.

CATERING LICENCES.

Under the Defence Regulations, when a person makes an application for a catering licence to the Food Executive Officer of the Ministry of Food, it is essential that he shall state whether the premises, in the opinion of the Local Authority, are considered to be fit for the purpose, and before the Food Committee will consider such application, the opinion of the Council is sought.

Numerous such cases were dealt with during the year under review. In all cases the premises were inspected and particular attention paid to water supply and sewage disposal. Almost invariably where the applicant failed to produce evidence that a suitable and sufficient supply of water could be made available at all times, an adverse report was given to the Food Executive Officer. Particularly did this apply to premises in the coastal areas where the only means of water supply is rainwater and water delivered by lorry either from the mains of this Council or the Rye Corporation.

Though this procedure has proved extremely irksome to many applicants, it has at least ensured that cafes and eating houses have not been established where it was possible that other than wholesome water would be used.

ICE CREAM.

With the coming into force of the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations on the 1st May, 1947, a great deal of attention was focussed upon this extremely popular article of food.

These Regulations were designed to give Local Authorities further control over the manufacture and storage of ice cream, and by making some form of heat treatment necessary in the preparation of ice cream it is hoped and expected that a product of a higher bacteriological standard will be available to the public.

During the year, fourteen applications for registration of premises for the sale of ice cream were considered.

In twelve cases applications were granted; of these, seven were applications for the sale of wrapped ice cream and five for the sale of ice cream manufactured elsewhere than on the premises.

In one case certain premises were registered for the sale of wrapped ice cream only, but it was later discovered that ice cream was being sold in cones and wafers from the premises. In this case the retailer was required to appear before the Committee, and an assurance was given that the practice would be discontinued and only properly wrapped ice cream would be sold therefrom in the future.

HOP-PICKERS' ACCOMMODATION.

There are within the District 56 camps, which accommodated nearly 5,000 hop-pickers during the season.

The usual inspections were made at these camps and it was necessary to draw attention to minor contraventions of the Byelaws.

It is to be regretted that the standard of accommodation is slowly deteriorating, due in the main to the lack of labour and materials for repairs and renovations. As has previously been pointed out, the Byelaws are so weak in their application that it is extremely difficult to raise the standard of accommodation, and at the present time it is only possible to deal with minor defects, i.e. improper sanitary accommodation, water supply etc.

WATER SUPPLY.

There are within the District five Statutory and two Private Water Undertakings which supply the following parishes:-

Statutory Undertakings.

Parish supplied.

Battle R. D. C.	Battle, Crowhurst, Playden, part Icklesham (Winchelsea and Rye Harbour).
Hastings Corporation	Part Westfield and part Ore.
Heathfield and District Water Company	Ticehurst, Burwash, Etchingham, Salehurst, Bodiam.
Cranbrook and District Water Company	Northiam.
Bexhill Corporation	Catsfield.

Private Undertakings.

Fairlight Cove Water Co.	Part Fairlight (Waites Estate), (Warren Estate).
Firehills Water Company	Part Fairlight (Firehills Estate).

<u>Parish.</u>	(a) <u>Houses directly</u> <u>connected to</u> <u>Main.</u>	(b) <u>Houses served</u> <u>by standpipes.</u>	(c) <u>Trade</u> <u>supplies.</u>	(d) <u>Promises</u> <u>supplied by</u> <u>meter</u>
Battle	1,107	-	-	114
Bodiam	71	-	-	-
Brightling	4	-	-	-
Burwash	511	-	-	-
Catsfield	126	-	10	-
Crowhurst	137	-	1	29
Etchingham	241	-	-	-
Guestling	2	-	-	-
Icklesham (Winchelsea)	217	-	-	14
Icklesham (Rye Harbour)	105	-	-	14
Iden	1	-	-	-
Northiam	307	-	-	7
Ore	32	-	-	-
Playden	38	-	-	4
Rye Foreign	19	-	-	3
Salhurst	640	-	-	-
Ticehurst	727	-	-	-
Westfield	110	-	-	-

The area is still in a very precarious position in regard to public water supplies, no major scheme having been carried out during the year. Until the Darwell Reservoir Scheme of the Hastings Corporation is completed, there is very little prospect of any improvement in the supply of water to the coastal area.

The only extension of public main was carried out in Battle, where a 4" main was laid to the Temporary Housing Site in Marley Lane. It was not possible to carry out the extension to Withereenden Hill, Burwash, although this was approved in principle in 1946.

With the extremely dry summer of 1947 the position in many areas became very serious indeed, scores of families being entirely dependent upon water being delivered by lorry, very often from distant places. The Council is making every effort to expedite the provision of piped water to those parts of the District where such does not now exist.

Water Samples:

During the year forty-nine samples of suspected water were submitted to the Analyst for chemical and/or bacteriological examination.

The Analyst reported that no less than forty of these samples were polluted or otherwise unsafe for drinking or domestic purposes. Appropriate action was taken in respect of the unsatisfactory samples.

201 houses were connected to the main supplies during the year, including the houses on the Temporary Housing Sites.

Analyses of Public Supplies:

During the year 25 reports were received from the Statutory Water Undertakings, all of which satisfied the Analyst in regard to both chemical and bacteriological purity.

Private Estate Supplies:

I am pleased to report that after providing a proper treatment plant in connection with the Toot Rock Well at Pett Level, samples of water submitted for chemical and bacteriological examination proved satisfactory and the Council resolved that the new owner be informed that it would not oppose any application to the Court for the lifting of the Closing Order made in respect of this Well. It would, however, be necessary to submit monthly samples to the Public Analyst in order that the Council could be kept informed as to the purity or otherwise of this supply.

I think, however, the Council will feel satisfied that the protracted negotiations with the new owner, who has acted in a most public spirited manner, have at last borne fruit, and that a satisfactory conclusion to this most difficult problem has now been reached.

On the other hand I regret to report that further complaints were received during the year regarding the insufficiency of the water supplied by the Waites and Warren Estates Undertakings. There seems little doubt that at the first sign of drought the source of supply of these Undertakings quickly fails, and it is unfortunate that so little can be done at the present time to alleviate the serious difficulties experienced by the residents in that area.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

In 1946, I reported that Messrs. John Taylor & Sons, Consulting Engineers of Westminster, S.W.1., had submitted a Preliminary Report upon the existing conditions in the District relative to sewerage and sewage disposal, and had made recommendations for the consideration of the Council. They had also been called upon to prepare detailed schemes for parts of the parishes of Icklesham and Burwash.

Apart from the fact that the latter two schemes have been prepared for submission to the Ministry of Health, no further progress under this heading has been made.

Robertsbridge Sewerage:

Further trouble was experienced in connection with the above sewerage scheme owing to the return of flood conditions during the early part of February. Owing to the infiltration of surface water, sewage was forced out of the inspection chambers in Station Road, and whilst there was no evidence of the escape of solids as on previous occasions, nevertheless in view of the mixing of sewage with the flood water, which had risen well above the thresholds, a serious nuisance was found to exist.

Further trouble was experienced in High Street, where the pressure in the sewers had lifted the manhole cover in the road creating a fountain 16 inches in height.

To meet the situation it was necessary temporarily to divert all sewage from the Brightling Road area to the old treatment works, themselves situate in an already flooded area.

The Public Health Committee viewed this situation with some alarm and appointed a Sub-Committee to inspect and report upon the whole of the system. This Sub-Committee duly met and recommended that Messrs. John Taylor and Sons be asked to submit a full report.

SALVAGE.

I am glad to record that there was a slight increase in the quantity of salvage collected during the year.

The total amount of salvage collected since the commencement of the scheme to the 31st December, 1947, was 2,524 tons 13 cwts. 2 qrs. 10 lbs. with a cash value of £12,099. 17. 6d.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that most types of salvage, particularly paper, rags, bones, etc. will be required for some considerable time to come.

The following table shows the amount and value of salvage dealt with during the year:-

	t.	c.	q.	lbs.	£.	s.	d.
Waste paper	81	5	2	0	563	5	5
Ferrous Metal	91	16	2	0	203	16	3
Non-ferrous Metals	3	14	1	0	153	5	7
Bottles and Jars	30	15	1	7	269	9	5
Rags	5	2	0	0	107	8	6
Rubber	3	6	1	8	3	10	10
Bones	1	18	2	0	4	16	3
Sundries			3	19	3	11	8
	217	19	1	5	1,309	3	11

PUBLIC CLEANSING SERVICE.

Whilst I still consider that the public has a right to expect a better service of refuse collection, I am pleased to be able to report that the number of complaints as to non-collection further decreased during the year 1947.

Any slight improvement in the collection service has been due to the fact that the Council purchased two new vehicles in 1945. The areas served by these were covered more speedily and without loss of collection-time due to mechanical breakdown.

The question of further vehicle replacements was considered by the Council in February, 1947, and although orders for two 27 h.p. ten-cubic yard refuse collection vehicles were placed with the manufacturers, no deliveries had been made by the end of the year under review.

Fully controlled tipping of refuse is undertaken only at Winchelsea, the remaining tips at Battle, Brode, Guestling and Hurst Green being much too deep for the successful application of this method.

During the war large quantities of clean tins and light iron were collected, sorted and stacked for the Government. In all, more than fifty tons of such materials were accumulated at easily accessible points - where they still remain! These heaps of rusting light metal are difficult and expensive to remove but until this has been done they will continue to add to the unsightliness of the refuse dumps.

Efforts to keep tidy the refuse tips at Battle are also hampered by the problem of sludge disposal from the adjoining sewage treatment works.

After an interval of many years it was possible to obtain a limited supply of disused railway sleepers during 1947. The tipping tracks at the refuse dumps have been somewhat improved as a result, but it is hoped to obtain further deliveries early in 1948.

HOUSE REQUISITIONING.

With the passing of time it becomes increasingly difficult to obtain accommodation by requisitioning.

None the less a further six houses were taken over during 1947, bringing the total under requisition to 19. This figure includes two properties requisitioned during the war to house bombed-out families. These 19 houses provided accommodation for 23 families but unfortunately two houses are awaiting derequisition owing to their condition, the cost of thorough repair being greater than would be sanctioned.

The two bombed-out families have been rehoused in temporary houses.

Two other families have also been allocated temporary houses and their requisitioned houses have been occupied by new families.

The waiting list (186), however, has grown rather than been reduced, as the few houses which become available nearly always have to be allocated to distressed families on the point of eviction who would otherwise be left on the street.

The total visits paid during the year were 259, and 125 separate properties were inspected with a view to requisitioning.

The completion of temporary and permanent houses has eased the pressure a little but the greatest problem remains the housing of families which are evicted under Court Orders and have little time in which to help themselves. Some of these have had to be disappointed.

A total of 25 notices was posted during the year but 19 of these had to be withdrawn.

It has always been the Council's policy to deal with every case as an individual problem, and to be scrupulously fair. There is no doubt that had an arbitrary and ruthless course been pursued the number of properties taken over would have been greater, but there is no merit in alleviating one hardship by creating another.

Another matter which is puzzling to the man in the street is an apparent failure to requisition large houses for occupation by several families. How few large houses are suitable for this purpose can only really be appreciated by the technically minded but every such house known to be empty has been inspected. In the two cases where requisitioning was attempted the projects had to be abandoned for economic reasons.

However it is fair to say that no houses have remained empty to the Council's knowledge, without prompt and successful action being taken to get them occupied, and in this lies the justification for the work done.

The Council has continued in its decision not to requisition houses in the Camber and Winchelsea Beach areas where water supplies and drainage are so generally bad, but with the successful treatment of the Toot Rock water supply the Council decided to treat Pett Level in the same way as the district so far as requisitioning is concerned.

NEW DWELLINGS.

During the year dwellings were erected as under:

New Houses.

By the Council	.. ..	9 Permanent Traditional
		100 Temporary
By Private Enterprise	.. ..	10 Permanent Traditional
Conversions to Dwelling Houses		1

Dwelling Houses incomplete at 31st December, 1947.

By the Council	.. ..	146 Permanent Traditional
By Private Enterprise	.. ..	92
Conversions to dwellings incomplete at 31st December, 1947	.. ..	9

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

The problem of the control of Moveable Dwellings has continued to exercise the Council during 1947, but in view of the total absence of pure water supplies in the coastal areas, it has been decided that the policy of resisting applications for licences under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, should be continued.

There are many sub-standard dwellings of the shack type in the coastal areas which will remain to be dealt with, and although the Control of Development Orders now in force have enabled the Council to prevent the reconstruction or repair of some of the worst types, great difficulty is being experienced in clearing up these areas under existing legislation.

INFESTATION ORDER, 1943.

During the year no less than 141 requests for treatment were received from the public concerning rat infestation. These and many others were dealt with by Mr. Dixon, the Council's Rodent Operative.

The Council's refuse tips, sewage disposal works, and sewer outfalls received regular treatment. Mr. Dixon dealt with 47 major infestations.

The routine tests of the Council's sewers were carried out under the supervision of an official of the Ministry. One infestation was found in the sewer system at Rye Harbour. This was cleared and the defect in the pipe repaired by the Council.

The Ministry of Food's formula for poisoning was used in every case and its recommendation as to procedure strictly followed. The poisons used include zinc phosphide, red squill and arsenic.

Councillor Mighall, as the Council's representative, and Mr. Dixon attended the quarterly meetings of No. 3 Workable Area Committee.

During the year the War Agricultural Executive Committee have afforded the Council their co-operation by reporting suspected infestations in non-agricultural properties.

Total number of premises inspected	..	..	547
Number of premises cleared of rats	205
Number of requests for treatment	141
Total number of visits 1,467

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